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THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM

ISSUED BY DIRECTION AND UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN AMERICA.

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WILLIAM Q. JUDGE, President.

Each member is invited to send questions, answers to questions, opinions, and notes upon Theosophical subjects. When necessary, the various communications will be condensed by the editor. Members should be careful to write distinctly and on one side of the paper only.

In sending questions, or answers to questions, whenever an assertion is made that such and such is a doctrine, or that "it is said in Theosophical literature," and the like, the name of author, article, volume, and page referred to must be given.

All communications should be addressed to **The Editor, Theosophical Forum, 144 Madison Avenue, New York City.**

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

QUESTION 64.

Ages of blind, usurious laws have brought the world to ruin. Our struggle for physical existence prevents the full study of Divine Wisdom. Would it not be wise for Theosophists to unitedly advocate improved conditions, say through the Labor Exchange system or some such method? One may ask, why should we strive for that which would place us on the higher planes of thought or feeling when conditions are so unfavorable?

William Q. Judge.—I cannot admit the two first assertions of the question. The world is not yet in ruins; the struggle for existence does not prevent the full study of Divine Wisdom. The study of self, the attempt to carry out the old direction, "Man, know thyself," does not depend on human laws, nor upon conditions. The body may be in prison, or engaged in incessant labor, but the soul and mind cannot be bound by environment unless we ourselves allow it. The soldier does not seem to be in a business or conditions favorable to self-development, but even while in his sentry-box he can still think on the matter and thus study

it—for study does not mean mere reading of books and writing of compositions. People fail in their efforts to study truth just because they start out by formulating a need for different conditions, or by insisting on having surrounding objects in just such a position and of such a quality before they will begin the work. They are wrong.

Inasmuch as Divine Wisdom and the nature of the Self are not material, physical things or objects, they are not to be confounded with mere physical surroundings. Hence material environments should not be permitted to confuse or throw back the man who desires to study that Divine Wisdom.

Again, as all things down to the most gross from the most ethereal are a part of Divine Wisdom, it is a mistake to try and destroy or put away because one does not presently like them, the very conditions in which under Karma one is obliged to study Divine Wisdom.

The second part of the question contains a proposition for the T.S., or Theosophists as a body, to advocate some one or other of the many proposed reforms. This should never be done. The T.S. is free and independent of all such reforms, while it applauds all good results. But it does not follow that the reformatory measures are the best. Nor has the last word been spoken on those subjects. It is very wise and right to alter if we can the oppressive conditions about the poor or others. But so long as the philosophy, the religion, and the view of life held by the people are wrong, just so long all reforms will be temporary. The people must be altered in thought and heart, and then conditions will right themselves. I therefore strongly oppose any propositions looking toward binding the T.S. down to any system of reform or of legislation. Individual members can do as they please about it so long as they do not involve the Society.

Dr. J. D. Buck.—There is something back of "blind, usurious laws;" they are a result rather than a cause of misery and selfishness. A large part of the struggle for existence is unnecessary, and lies with ourselves rather than with our "oppressors." We *want too much*, and try to ape "our luxurious oppressors." Theosophists do "unitedly advocate improved conditions," else they are no Theosophists. "Through Labor Exchange systems"? Yes; if *individuals* so elect: by endorsement of bodies of Theosophists; no. We should not strive selfishly for that which will put us on a higher plane of thought. If we do we will never get there, no matter what we imagine or desire. There is but one way to

reach a higher plane, and that is by unselfish labor for humanity as a whole. But the T.S. should be kept disentangled from all other organizations, otherwise it will soon get swamped and be heard of no more.

Dr. Jerome A. Anderson.—Laws have not brought the world to ruin. Broadly speaking, they are always the expression of the conceptions of justice, brotherhood, etc., which the people who either enact or obey them hold. Therefore it is worse than useless to waste effort in the endeavor to make men better by law. Change their conceptions of brotherhood, of justice, and of human life, and the present system of unjust laws will fall by its own weight. Instead of struggling to compel by legal enactment a recognition of a higher ethic than that of which a people is capable, it should be the aim of all the Theosophists to awaken this higher conception by sowing broadcast the truths of his purer philosophy of life; to enlighten the darkness of human struggling and passion by the sublime teachings of karma and reïncarnation.

"Teach to eschew causes; the ripple of effects thou shalt let run its course," says the Wisdom of the East. The obvious injustice of present social conditions may, in an age so fallen, be the only effectual method of arousing men to live higher lives. True growth lies in sorrow and suffering; not in physical ease or mental content. Human sympathy and compassion are to be stimulated and encouraged by every means possible, but most "labor reforms" are but poor attempts at this, and in reality tend to foster class prejudice. They are, as they have been not inaptly termed, but "belly philosophies" at best, and Theosophists are too few to waste energy in their propagation, however desirable to a surface view this may appear. Let us do our duty as citizens by aiding all true reforms with our countenance and votes, but, farther than this, "let the ripple of effects run its course."

Eva F. Gates.—I do not perceive that the world is in ruins On the contrary, the outlook for the world appears to be exceedingly hopeful, because so many noble hearts and minds are seeking to better the conditions amid which we live.

The first incentive to action is the recognition of the need and desire of action; the second, the decision of how our force had best be applied to accomplish the wisest action.

The world is being stirred to its depths by the growing perception of the evils of our social, economical, political and moral conditions. It is just opening its eyes to the need of action.

Next must follow the decision of how to apply remedies to better conditions confessedly evil.

To better conditions we must better that which makes conditions — mankind.

This is preëminently what Theosophy seeks to do. To offer sound reasons why the selfish man should forego his greed, why the evil man should voluntarily seek good, is what we do when we present to the world again the doctrines of Karma and reïncarnation.

Conditions are effects, and Theosophy tries to influence the making of causes; conditions change to fit the souls undergoing discipline to remedy faults; change or obliterate men's faults and you change the conditions amid which they live. Help them to eliminate faults, and you help them to improve their conditions by their own force of character.

Theosophy teaches men to build character, and character makes its own conditions, without outside help.

The means by which character improves conditions are various and of secondary importance. The main point is to build the character: all else follows naturally.

Consequently we should not tie our faith to any "Labor Exchange system," or any particular method, but work on the broad principle of uplifting the thoughts of men, and the material conditions will be benefited as a natural result.

Edward B. Rambo.—The present condition of the world is just what we have made it ourselves; its laws are our laws, and the conditions favorable or unfavorable are our own proper conditions for the time.

It would not be wise for "Theosophists to unitedly advocate any system for improved conditions," for a united advocacy of any scheme, be it Labor Exchange, Bellamy, Free Silver or Socialism, would commit the Theosophical Society to such scheme, and it should be ever kept free from any scheme, having none.

It is proper for any individual Theosophist to advocate any scheme for the amelioration of Humanity that he believes in, and he does not do his duty if he does not do so, but he should commit no one to his method. The world is to be bettered by the raising of each individual unit in it and only by teaching the unselfishness which is at the basis of Theosophy will we raise the units.

Certainly we should struggle when conditions are the most unfavorable. No advance or betterment would be possible it

we did not. Should a starving man refuse to eat a morsel of food because he did not have the promise of food next day? Stalled in the mire, would one use no effort to be released?

The more dismal the conditions the greater need for struggle.

I think well of any scheme advocated by a member of the T.S. provided it is unselfish, for by such advocacy he gives to his Theosophy a practical turn, no matter if his brother fails to endorse it.

Mary F. Lang.—It is perhaps a trifle of an exaggeration to say that the world is "brought to ruin." The Theosophist, with his safeguard of Karma, has a right to optimism.

If much is wrong in present social and economic conditions, we have each our full share of responsibility therefor.

Believing this, our karmic accountability for future conditions is greater than that of others who do not realize this truth. Hence the necessity for present effort. That we must struggle for physical existence is a karmic effect. That we must struggle for spiritual growth, is likewise karmic, but is also proof that we are capable of development, for growth is not the result of inertia. We may be sure that when we are ready for the "full study of Divine Wisdom" we will not be dwarfed by physical environment. Improved conditions, as through the Labor Exchange system, etc., while they may, for the time being, ameliorate evils, and are therefore to that extent good, will never produce permanent change, for they deal only with effects. Permanent change can only result from change of cause—change of mental attitude. Purify the mind of the man who makes the sweat-shop a necessity, and the latter will cease to exist—not until then.

Why should *we* strive for that which would place *us* on the higher plane of thought or feeling? Because whether conditions are favorable or unfavorable, our responsibility to our brother remains unchanged. The moment that one recognizes the possibility of the Higher Life, that moment he becomes a conscious factor in the evolution of the race, and cannot evade preparing himself (at whatever cost of effort) for the service of man.

Elise M. Selden.—Since all conditions are the result of thought and belief, it is plainly wise that we should first alter belief before any real beneficence can be secured. Our government, with all the conditions it entails, is the outgrowth of our beliefs, and is just as good as our beliefs. A very little study into this question will prove this. We believe in war, and there-

fore not only encourage it but shape our policy with reference to it. More than this, it is believed by all civilized (?) nations that the ability to war successfully with other nations is a criterion of enlightenment. So much for wrong belief, the execution of which arrests a nation's spiritual growth. Theosophists individually do advocate improved conditions and form a part of every organization engaged in the work of encouraging and uplifting humanity, or modifying existing evils. To separate Theosophists from other bodies, where they are already at work, and form a distinct organization, would be fundamentally opposed to the spirit of Theosophy, which recognizes in each man a centre,— from which can radiate unlimited power for good, without regard to platform, party or person.

The opportunity for the study of Divine Wisdom is not regulated by physical conditions—the struggle for existence is no bar to interior illumination. The mendicant is perhaps nearer the attainment of it than the prince in his castle with all his leisure.

The age is largely materialistic and the message of Buddha and Jesus still unacceptable. The duty of Theosophists and the Theosophical Society is to arouse thought, so that an awakened conscience will demand a change of conditions. Then the iron age will be replaced by a golden one; but the thought will bring about the condition—not the condition the thought.

E. T. Hargrove.—I would recommend a quiet reading of *The Ocean of Theosophy* followed by Carlyle's *French Revolution* as the most comprehensive answer to this question. Who made the "blind, usurious human laws?" Man. The questioner himself may not be karmically guiltless in this respect, if Reïncarnation be a fact as we believe. Can you alter the minds and hearts of men by legislation, by Labor Exchanges? If so, our task were easy. Unfortunately, experiment has proved that the animal in man refuses to be controlled by laws of human invention, and that the very law makers not infrequently break them.

Biology teaches us that function precedes organization. That is to say, man fights before he makes weapons with which to fight. But Theosophy goes more deeply into the question, showing that *desire precedes function.* Before man fights he desires to do so. In this way does all natural growth begin with desire; following desire comes function (man fights with hands and teeth); following function comes organization (man makes weapons of increasing deadliness). Any arbitrary attempt from without to alter the organism before a desire for such alteration has

arisen in that organism results in reäction—so that the last state of that man or body of men will be worse than the first.

Take the forced celibacy of the priests. The desire for such celibacy not having arisen in many of them, you find in history ample proof of the terrible reäction that has resulted from this artificial enforcement by others of what *they* held to be an ideal condition.

To attempt to force conditions of brotherhood on men, whether rich or poor, who do not desire them, would inevitably lead to a reäction which would once more make brotherhood a word of ill-fame among men. But if you can arouse in humanity a true desire for brotherhood, it would not take many minutes to make "improved conditions" which would be maintained as easily as they were made.

So let us try by word and deed and ceaseless effort to arouse a real desire for universal brotherliness, first in ourselves and then in others, meanwhile knowing that "unfavorable conditions" can and should be used as aids to the attainment of a "higher plane of thought and feeling," and that if we would learn how to take advantage of ideal conditions, once obtained, we must straightway make the utmost of those that now surround us.

Mercie M. Thirds.—As human laws are merely the formulation of human will, it must follow that any effort to eradicate their evil results should include the reformation of man himself. It is useless to expect bad and foolish people to make laws that shall be wise and good. Even if we admit that they may do so from motives of self-interest, experience proves that laws which are not sustained by public opinion cannot be enforced. This is true even under despotic rule. For similar reasons any improvement in outward condition which is not the result of better thought and morals will have no permanency. The evil in human nature will still have vent, and will nullify in our system the good which is in excess of public virtue.

For these reasons Theosophists usually think that it is wiser to try to improve the moral condition of society than to work for legal or material changes. These will inevitably follow the demands of our moral status. Consequently, as an organization, we do not adopt such methods as are suggested by the questioner, though we certainly do advocate improved conditions.

While it is true that the struggle for physical existence hinders study, it does not necessarily retard spiritual growth. Divine Wisdom is learned from experience, not from books. Nature has

lessons for souls in all stages of development, and many are not ready for the higher planes of thought and inspiration. Those that are will probably always find the ideas which are needed for their development. It may well be that a struggle for physical life is the speediest means of overcoming desire for it. If we then reflect that it is desire for experience in matter that keeps the soul from experience in spirit, we may understand why it is that lives of hardship may be more favorable to spiritual progress than are lives of comfort. Nature often teaches us her deepest lessons when we feel ourselves most neglected.

So long as we are content with the plane whereon we live there is no reason why we should strive to reach a higher. We are in fact able to do so only when the old is so outgrown that it can no longer satisfy our needs. But we can train our thoughts and desires to dwell on higher things, so giving an upward tendency to our whole being, until in time it is attuned to spiritual things.

QUESTION 55—*(continued)*.

How far should branches go in permitting the discussions at their meetings to be led into questions concerning topics not directly bearing on the Theosophical philosophy or in permitting members or outsiders to detail their views on socialism, spiritualism, single tax, or the like, unless they have a direct bearing on Universal Brotherhood?

Dr. J. D. Buck.—On page 131 of the FORUM for January Claude Falls Wright makes the following statement. "The T.S., as everybody knows, does not teach any philosophy . . ." This seems to me a rather startling statement, unless it means that none of the so-called philosophies, like that of Spinoza, Kant, Schopenhauer, or Herbert Spencer, are taught. That the T.S. teaches *Philosophy* pure and simple, the grandest and most complete ever conceived by man, is, to my mind, its strongest bulwark and its crowning glory, and I do not like to see Brother Wright's statement go unchallenged or unexplained. The three postulates, or "fundamental propositions," referred to on page 14 (old edition) of the *S.D.*, it seems to me, logically unfold into a complete philosophy, or the apprehension of the "rational order pervading the Universe." This, neither science nor any of the so-called philosophies known to the West can afford to the earnest student. This philosophy runs through the *S.D.* like the thread in a musical composition. "On their clear apprehension," says

H. P. B. in referring to these fundamental propositions, "depends all that follows." (*S. D.*, proem, p. 13, old edition.)

From the first proposition we derive our concept of matter and force, substance and energy, spirit and intelligence, and the philosophical concept of emanation. From the second proposition the idea of time and eternity, or duration and progression or evolution through the law of cycles; and from the third proposition, brotherhood, reïncarnation, and the perfectibility of man through individual effort and merit; or the law of Karma. No such foundation for logical conception, rational order, and intellectual apprehension of the order of the Universe can be found in literature; and this is, as I see it, the teaching of the T.S. Remove this, and only speculation and confusion reign. I see in this philosophy, as in nothing else, the irresistible power that is to carry Theosophy into the next, and all coming centuries—unless the philosophy is obscured or lost—and *compel* the Schopenhauer or Spencer of the future to adopt and teach it. And this philosophy is not the invention of man; not even of the Mahatma. It is the reading on the tressel-board of manifested nature, the ideals on which nature builds: the mahatic concepts that unravel the Cycles of Necessity, and the web of fate. The unaided intellect of man could not even discern it. It is the product of the united discoveries of trained Adepts, for millenniums, now first given to the world for thousands of years.

It is specially desirable that every F. T. S. should study and try to apprehend this philosophy, for otherwise his efforts toward forming a "Nucleus for a Universal Brotherhood of Man" are likely to be spasmodic, emotional, and at length to cease.

This philosophy deepens conviction by revealing the irrevocable *law* and the futility of all else than efforts to conform to it. His zeal, intelligence in explaining the problems of life, and his *steadfastness* find here their living root, and their constant nourishment. He is securely anchored for all time, and he is content because he knows the line of least resistance, and sees, in the decrees of fate, the divine beneficence.

Claude Falls Wright.— Having read the above remarks by Dr. Buck I should like to add, that, while I agree with all he says about the Theosophical philosophy and am aware that the mass of members in the Theosophical Society—myself included—accept it, yet I cannot help thinking that, when understood, he must approve my original statement that the Society itself does not *teach* any philosophy; indeed, in my opinion, it cannot strictly be said

to uphold any. I know that many persons believe the Theosophical Society to teach a philosophy, and actually to have a creed, but we have no right to assume that even the *Secret Doctrine* contains the teaching of the Society or that the "Fundamental Propositions" are its dogmas. Dr. Buck has quoted from H.P.B. Let me quote from her in the *Key to Theosophy*, Section 2: "The members of the Theosophical Society are free to profess whatever religion or philosophy they like, or *none*, if they so prefer, provided they are in sympathy with and ready to carry out one or more of the three objects of the association. The Society is a philanthrophic and scientific body for the propagation of the idea of brotherhood on practical instead of theoretic lines. The fellows may be Christians or Mussalmans, Jews or Parsees, Buddhists or Brahmans, Spiritualists or Materialists, it does not matter." Here we see distinctly the ideas of the Founder on this matter. The body of wisdom which has spread itself everywhere within the last twenty years, spoken of generally as the "Theosophical philosophy," has been made known to the world wholly through the labors of members of the organization who have accepted it as being the only explanation of life and the only reason for "Universal Brotherhood"—the first object of the Society. H. P. Blavatsky, as the greatest Theosophist of all, gave more to the movement and to the world than anyone else, but she frequently said that the last word had not been spoken or written, and that in the future other seers might arise within the T.S. and amplify, explain, or confirm the *Secret Doctrine*. The Society is the only salvation for the world at present in my opinion *because* it has no teachings and is willing to investigate all things. If it had teachings they would have to be defined,—and there are many who take radically different views concerning even the seemingly simple doctrine of reïncarnation. If we had teachings, we should have also to have *teachers*—and a priesthood would be inevitable. So pronounced were H.P.B's views as to this danger that she separated her school of teachings from the Theosophical Society, making it no longer an Esoteric *Section*, as it was formerly styled, but proclaiming it as distinct from the T.S. and calling it by another name.

SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION

FOR THE USE OF BRANCHES.

In articles and addresses never use Sanskrit or foreign terms without also giving the English meaning; use English terms preferably.

BUDDHISM.

Theosophy not Buddhism, which is one of the great exoteric world-religions. Founded by Gautama Buddha, once prince of Kapilavastu, who was born about the year 621 B.C. Maya, his mother, commonly believed by Buddhists to have been a virgin, like the mother of nearly every "Saviour," but the Buddhist Scriptures do not state this. He performed many "miracles," but never claimed to be more than all men might in time become, stating he had reached enlightenment through his own exertions. Belonged to the Kshattriya or warrior caste, the old teachers of the Brahmans. Did not found a new religion, but was a reformer of priest-ridden Hinduism, substituting for it the old trans-Himalayan and Kshattriya doctrines. He taught that only a knower of Brahma was a true Brahman and that birth in the Brahman caste did not confer any moral privilege. Incurred the hatred of the orthodox. Had an exoteric and esoteric doctrine, the latter (Theosophy) the same as the esoteric side of every true religion. This fact denied by Max Müller and other Orientalists, but is clearly stated in the *Sad dharma-Pundarika*, chapter v, verses 1-4, and elsewhere. The Southern Buddhism of to-day the outcome of Buddha's exoteric teaching. It is materialistic compared to Northern Buddhism, which is the outcome of Buddha's esotericism, though corrupt and overgrown with Indian and Bhon exotericism. Buddhism the only bloodless religion. Never persecuted others, but its followers were persecuted by Brahmans. Buddha, like Jesus, left no writings known to the world. The "Triple Basket," or Buddhist canon, arranged at the first council after Buddha's death. The *Vinaya-pitaka*, or discipline; the *Sutta-pitaka*, or discourses of Buddha; the *Abhidhamma-pitaha*, or metaphysics (not yet translated). These teach Karma, Reïncarnation, the purest ethics. Are pessimistic in regard to earth-life. Buddhism followed to-day by over one-third of the human race.

REFERENCES.

Theosophical Glossary, art. "Buddhism;" *Five Years of Theosophy*, see index; "Dhamapada," "Buddhist Suttas" in *The Sacred Books of the East; Buddhism*, Prof. Rhys Davids.

THE THIRD OBJECT OF THE SOCIETY.

"To study and investigate the psychic and other powers latent in man." Generally misunderstood. Taken as applying only to astral powers, which are of the least importance. *Psyche* means soul or breath, and "psychic powers" here mean soul powers. The power of mind over matter. The power of the soul over the mind and kamic nature, of self-restraint. The power of concentration. The power of the will and of the imagination to create forms on all planes of form. The power of the mind generally to generate force. Thought as a power. The power to understand one's real motives. The power to trace

a thought to its source. The power to discriminate between the real and the unreal; between right and wrong. The power to "hear from within" by making the mind receptive to higher impressions. The great power of keeping silent in speech and thought. The last is rarely cultivated; yet it is of the first importance. Of much more value than astral clairvoyance or clair-audience. And these are not usually "powers," since they are spasmodic and entirely beyond control as a rule. The best way to cultivate any of these real powers is in the small affairs of life. The highest powers that are used by the Adept are latent in ordinary man, who uses many of them unconsciously, for the higher is present in the lower though not fully expressed or understood. The powers all men exercise in dream; in daily instances of mental telegraphy. "Brain-waves." These powers should be studied and investigated. The importance of observing one's daily experience. Too many people learn nothing from it because they are in too great a hurry and because they have not realized that the things and events nearest to them are often the most mysterious. No need to go to séances or to some other part of the world to study occult powers. They are within us. They surround us. The laws governing them should be discovered. So every member who studies and properly investigates himself is following the third object of the Society.

REFERENCES.

The Ocean of Theosophy, chap. xvi; *The Culture of Concentration*, (reprint from the *Path*;) *Astral Intoxication*, (reprint from *The Path*.)

THE PHYSICAL BODY.

Built onto and into its prototype, the astral body. No hard and fast division between these two "sheaths." The nervous system closest in touch with the astral body. The brain and nervous system one form of the *Ashwattha*, growing "with its roots above and its branches below." Body composed of millions of "lives," of which the microbes of science are one form. These "lives" compose all things in nature, from a tree to an elephant. Their ceaseless motion. They arrange themselves as cells. Cells are ideal forms. The body the most illusionary of the principles; momentary changes in its composition. On the death of the body, these "lives," no longer correlated, run riot as destructive agents, having become separative. Every "life" has a consciousness of its own, with certain tendencies and desires. Selective action of the cells, taking from the blood what they need, rejecting the rest, proves this. The healing of a wound by these "lives," without the conscious participation of the human mind. Every cell has a centralized or specialized consciousness. In combination these produce a further centralization of consciousness in the organs, each with its "presiding deity." All these with habits and desires of their own. One meaning of the Hindu "crores of gods." The heart the particular organ of *manas;* the liver and spleen the organs of *kama*. Many desires and tendencies of man arise from foolish identification of himself with these bodily desires. The effect of heredity, family and national, on the moral and physical character of the body. Possible to greatly extend the life of the body through knowledge of its occult properties and the laws governing it.

REFERENCES.

Ocean of Theosophy, pp. 33-37; *Secret Doctrine*, vol. I, pp. 9 and 261, o.e.; "Kosmic Mind," in *Studies in Occultism*, No. iv; "Psychic and Noëtic Action," in *Studies in Occultism*, No. iii, pp. 159, 160; *Bhagavad Gîtâ*, chap. xv, verse 1.

DUTY.

The continuous teaching of the *Bhagavad-Gîtâ*. The ethical teaching of this book is scientific. "If thou wilt not perform the duty of thy calling and fight out the field, thou wilt abandon thy natural duty and thy honor, and be guilty of a crime." One's "natural duty" the result of Karma. This must be worked through. When worked through it falls off, as the old skin from a serpent. In the general economy of nature, to attempt the duty of another creates confusion. No action is perfectly pure, and one's own natural duty, as the result of one's own thoughts and acts in this life and in past lives, should be performed even though it be stained with faults. If performed as a duty, unselfishly and without attachment to results, good will ensue for oneself and all men. For it is not sufficient to do one's *own* duty; it must be done as a *duty* owed to the supreme Self, with that motive in view. All this especially applies to thought, as every act originates in the mind. Especially avoid the duty of another in thought. The homely saying, "To mind one's own business," should be taken as applying chiefly to the mind. The results of an action once performed cannot be altered; the law deals with results. Therefore the results should be mentally left to the law, or "offered to the Supreme." The folly of worrying over results; of regrets, of fears and hopes in regard to them. Beyond our reach; why then waste time and force on such things if no practical object is to be gained? The difficulty of discovering one's duty in many cases due to an attempt to do so before the necessity has arrived. When in doubt as to a duty one should stand still. The result of living according to these rules is a purification or clarification of the mind, which is the vehicle of the soul. Following this clarification comes illumination, from within outwards.

REFERENCES.

Bhagavad-Gîtâ, (Judge's Edition), chap. ii, p. 14; chap. xviii, pp. 128, 129; chap. v, pp. 39, 40.; *Letters That Have Helped Me*, pp. 36, 40, 48; "Notes on the *Bhagavad-Gîtâ*," *The Path*, vol. x, Sept.

THEOSOPHICAL NEWS AND WORK.

Los Angeles T.S. reports great interest in Theosophy at present. Good lectures are given, attended by large audiences.

Tathagata T.S. (San Ardo) holds regular meetings twice a week, one for private study and the other—Sunday afternoons—for the public.

Detroit, Mich. On the evening of January 14th Mrs. Lillie H. Fisk, of Ann Arbor, addressed a special meeting of the Michigan Society for Psychical Research, at Prismatic Hall.

H. T. Patterson, who has been making a business tour in the west and south, visited the Cincinnati T.S. on February 11th and spoke on *The Occult Arts vs. True Occultism* to an audience of sixty persons.

Beaver T.S. (Toronto) is doing very active work. At the Sunday evening meetings, the secretary writes, from 40 to 50 persons assemble, and the interest is growing everywhere. The other meetings average 30 in attendance.

THE UPASIKA T.S. during the month of January has continued its discussion of the question, "Of what use to Christians is a knowledge of Theosophy as presented to the world of to-day?" Meetings Wednesday evenings at 8.15, at 225 Lincoln Place.

KESHAVA BRANCH (Riverside, Calif.) Under the auspices of Keshava Branch, Mr. Abbott Clark is to give a series of five lectures in Riverside. He lectured Sunday evening, Feb. 2d, to a large and very intelligent audience on *Theosophy, Heaven and Hell.* A great deal of interest was manifested, and leaflets were in great demand. Keshava Branch is using the topics outlined in the FORUM for study, and finds them of much value.

SYRACUSE T.S. is in good working order, every member in earnest. There is no spasmodic enthusiasm, but a patient, steady "pull all together." We hold three weekly meetings. On Sunday afternoon we have a lecture from one of the members, free to the public. On Wednesday evening we hold discussions on subjects given on the syllabus. On Friday evening, our president, Dr. Dower, conducts the *S. D.* Class, which is made up of earnest students. Our library and reading room are well patronized. The interest outside the Society is steadily increasing. The sale of Theosophical literature is encouraging.—*(Communicated.)*

THE "H.P.B." BRANCH proposed to drop its regular lectures for this month and devote these evenings to the open meeting for "Questions on Theosophy Answered," as this method proves so interesting that it is desired to continue it regularly for this month at least. Some of the questions, such as "Who am I?" "What is the use of living anyhow?" "Why are there so many creeds?" bring out many good answers, and strangers say Theosophy seems to answer every problem. The regular *conversazione* was held as usual the first Saturday evening of the month. Miss E. M. Daniel gave a benefit at the Berkeley Lyceum on Saturday, the 25th, for the benefit of the branch, part of the entertainment being a play written by Miss Daniel. The best thing that has happened to the branch this month has been the several visits it has had in an informal way from our Brother James Pryse, who, though having been away for so long a time, has not only come back as a true American but has brought with him a breeze from Dublin, which always blows for our good.

BLAVATSKY BRANCH, Washington, D. C., has been giving a public lecture every Sunday evening since autumn, with a fair and, of late, growing attendance; five members constituting its corps of speakers. The principal work of its weekly branch meetings, Thursdays, has been the study and discussion of the topics outlined in the FORUM, which are being followed seriatim. A new impetus was given to the cause by Mr. Hargrove's short visit. His first public lecture, Jan. 7th, was on the general subject of Theosophy. The audience numbered about seventy-five persons, whose questions at the close of the lecture showed that much interest had been aroused. His second lecture, on *Reïncarnation and Karma*, nearly tested the seating capacity of our hall, fully 150 visitors being present, besides members. Mr. Hargrove was kept busy for an hour answering questions, and evidently made an excellent impression by his quiet earnestness, no less than by his apt and lucid explanations. No doubt his audiences would have continued to grow in size and interest had he been able to remain a few days longer.—*(Communicated.)*

THE COMMITTEE for Theosophical work in Central Connecticut made arrangements for Miss Margaret L. Guild to visit Central Connecticut and

help there, and the following is an account of the work done. She arrived in Meriden Jan. 14th, and lectured in the branch rooms in the evening to about twenty-five people; subject, *Theosophical Teachings*. Jan. 15th she lectured in the evening in the Meriden Branch rooms; subject, *Other Worlds than Ours;* about thirty people were present. Jan. 16th she went to Bristol and in the evening gave a parlor talk at the house of Mr. Muzzy, president of the Bristol Branch; subject, *Theosophy and the T.S.* Jan. 17th she gave a parlor talk in the evening at the house of Mr. Rockwell, Bristol; subject, *States of Consciousness*. Jan. 18th she arrived in New Britain and gave a parlor talk in the afternoon on Reïncarnation and Karma at the home of Mrs. Atkinson, the secretary of the branch. Sunday, Jan. 19th, at 4 p.m., she met the class studying *The Ocean of Theosophy*, at 6 p.m. she spoke at the young people's meeting in the Universalist Church, and at 8 p.m. lectured in the branch rooms on *The Origin of Evil*, fifty people attending the lecture. Jan. 20th she lectured in the branch rooms in New Britain, commencing at 8 p.m.; subject, *Occult Development*, over forty people being present. Jan. 21st she went to Meriden in the afternoon and gave a parlor talk to the members on *Theosophical Propaganda*. In the evening she went to Wallingford and lectured in the hotel parlor before thirty people; subject, *Hell is on Earth*. Jan. 22d she lectured in the hotel parlors, Wallingford, at 8 p.m; subject, *The Unpardonable Sin*. Over forty people attended the lecture. Jan. 23d she went to Hartford and lectured in the afternoon in Unity parlors on *The Origin of Evil;* rooms crowded, eighty or ninety people attending the lecture. In the evening she returned to Wallingford and met those interested to talk over the formation of a branch. Eight persons decided to join, and five or six more thought they would. Jan. 24th she went to Hartford and lectured in the evening in Unity parlors on *Occult Development*, and although very stormy, over sixty people attended the lecture. After the lecture the names of those who desired to have a branch started in Hartford were taken, fourteen or fifteen giving their names in. Jan. 25th Miss Guild returned home, taking with her the best wishes of those who had the pleasure of meeting her. In connection with the same work Miss Leoline Leonard spent a week at Bridgeport, Conn. Two public lectures were delivered on February 6th and 7th to audidences of fifty, the subjects being, *Is Theosophy the Religion of the Bible?* and *The Evolution of the Soul*. On Sunday evening, February 9th, she addressed the branch on *Occultism*. The remainder of the week was spent by her in visits among the members, and on Thursday evening the regular branch meeting was held and Theosophical propaganda discussed. On Friday evening, the 14th, she went to Danbury, Conn., and gave a parlor talk on Theosophy to twenty people. Arrangements are being made for a lecture before the Unitarian Society at Shelton, Conn., and for a parlor talk at Danbury.

OBITUARY NOTICE.

MILWAUKEE T.S. with sorrow reports the death of one of its most active, steadfast, and beloved members, Mrs. Annie E. Wood, who died at Santa Cruz, Calif., on December 7th, 1895, after an illness of only two days.

ABBOTT CLARK'S TOUR.

Abbott Clark lectured in West End, Los Angeles, December 15th, on *What is Theosophy, and what and where are Heaven and Hell?* and again on December 22d, subject: *If a Man Die shall he Live again? or, Proofs of Rebirth on Earth*. On Sunday morning, January 12th, Mr. Clark con-

ducted the services and made an address at a funeral, and in the evening gave a lecture at Odd Fellows' Hall on *The Mysteries of Magic, the Secrets of Alchemy and the Philosopher's Stone* to an audience which packed the hall, many remaining standing. Much time has been given to the local work in Los Angeles. A "Committee for Theosophic Work in Southern California" has been organized, and is getting upon a working basis.

LOTUS CIRCLE WORK.

A preliminary committee has been organized in the interest of the Lotus Circle and Theosophical Sunday-school work among the branches and members of the T.S.A. This has been organized with the purpose in view of ascertaining the best methods for adequately carrying on Theosophical work among children in this country, and to draw together those are already individually engaged in such labor. It solicits the views of all having experience in this matter and thus by correspondence and otherwise to effect a valuable school of propaganda. If sufficient encouragement is received a permanent committee will be organized as soon as possible.

Please address all communications to the Secretary, Lotus Circle Commit tee, 144 Madison avenue, New York City.

LEAGUE THEOSOPHICAL WORKERS.

The report of the League of Theosophical Workers shows an encouraging advance over the previous year. The amount at present in the hands of the treasurer is $72.20, being almost double the surplus of the preceding year. The most important branch of the League activities has proved to be the charitable work, $105.60 having been expended in relieving cases of want, while coal, medicine and food have been distributed. Propaganda work has included the free distribution of 757 Theosophical works, including tracts, etc.. and 2 volumes of the *Secret Doctrine*. There still remain 750 pieces awaiting distribution. A new scrap-book has been started, to contain a complete history of the T.S. It now contains 77 clippings. When the year is complete the present book will be bound and presented to the Headquarters Room. The stamp collection for the T.S.A. has been enlarged by 500 contributions. Some good work among the newspapers has been added to the other activities of the League.

MOVEMENTS OF E. T. HARGROVE.

On December 22d Mr. Hargrove addressed over 600 people in the Academy of Music at Macon, Ga. Considering the comparatively small population of this city, such a gathering spoke volumes for the work of the local branch. Washington was reached on January 7th, a lecture being given that evening. Another on the 9th was attended by about 200 people and was well reported in the newspapers. On the 11th Mr. Hargrove arrived at Pittsburg, speaking at a members' meeting on the afternoon of the 12th, and giving a public lecture the same evening, which was very well attended. Another public lecture followed on the 13th, and another on the 14th at Wilkinsburg. The newspapers were generous with interviews and reports. On the 15th he reached Philadelphia, lecturing that evening and on the 16th, 17th and 18th to good audiences, who were particularly active in asking questions. On the 19th he returned to New York.